

C. Remarks

The claims are 1 and 11-14, with claim 1 being the sole independent claim. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the invention. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the application as originally filed; see, e.g., reference numerals 213 and 214 and Figure 5B. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the present claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 11-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly obvious over Watanabe (U.S. Patent No. 5,689,289) in view of Iwasaki (U.S. Patent No. 6,328,403), Clark (U.S. Patent No. 7,265,856) and Omura (JP 10-255032).¹ Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly obvious over Watanabe in view of Iwasaki, Clark, Casey (U.S. Patent No. 6,097,499) and Omura. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

According to the present invention, a printing operation is performed by scanning a recording head which has ink of a plurality of colors. A print buffer is divided into a plurality of first regions corresponding with scan direction of the print head. Each first region is divided into a plurality of second regions corresponding with color. Reception means sequentially receives a plurality of block data corresponding to the first regions. The block data contains data corresponding to predetermined color and a color change code representing an end of data. The reception means receives data corresponding to a first color and data corresponding to a second color included in a single block with a predetermined color order. Acquisition means acquires data from the block data. Storage

¹ While the outstanding Office Action makes reference to a Samata reference, Applicants confirmed by telephone with the Examiner the basis of the outstanding rejections, namely rejection based on a combination of references including Omura and not Samata.

control means assigns block data to the first regions of the print buffer and stores the data acquired by the acquisition means in second regions of the first regions and changes the second regions to storing on the basis of the color change code read by the acquisition means. The key features of the present invention are not disclosed or suggested by the cited combination of art, whether considered alone or in combination.

At the outset, Applicants would like to incorporate by reference herein all previously advanced arguments against Watanabe, Iwasaki, Clark and Casey. The differences between those references and the presently claimed invention have been clearly noted. What is more, the Examiner has attempted to remedy at least some of the deficiencies in the combined disclosure of these references by the present use of Omura in the outstanding rejections. Applicants respectfully submit that Omura cannot remedy the basic deficiencies of the cited combination of Watanabe, Iwasaki, Clark and Casey.

Omura discloses “this secondary image data is changed into the color point data in which the position of the color change point in every raster line is shown” (paragraph [0013]) and “[t]he color change point data changed from binary picture data by the data conversion means 1 is stored in the color change point information storing part 3b” (paragraph [0014]). The color change code in the present invention is included in block data received by the reception means. The presently claimed color change code indicates an end of data corresponding to predetermined color. By contrast, the color change point data in Omura is data that is generated from image data and indicates a position change of color in a raster. Therefore, the color change code in the present invention is entirely different from the color change point data in Omura.

For at least these reasons, the present invention is not obvious over the cited references. Withdrawal of the §103 rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, favorable reconsideration and passage to issue is earnestly requested. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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